Department of Toxic Substances Control - Fact Sheet

August 2018

COMMUNITY UPDATE

The mission of DTSC is to protect California's people and environment from harmful effects of toxic substances by restoring contaminated resources, enforcing hazardous waste laws, reducing hazardous waste generation, and encouraging the manufacture of chemically safer products.

AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT: DRAFT CLOSURE PLANS FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITY AND RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS HANDLING FACILITY SANTA SUSANA FIELD LABORATORY

The United States Department of Energy (DOE) submitted draft Closure Plans (Plans) for the Hazardous Waste Management Facility (HWMF) and the Radioactive Materials Handling Facility (RMHF), in Area IV of the Santa Susana Field Laboratory (SSFL). Closure or cleanup activities for these buildings are limited to decontamination and demolition of building debris consisting of concrete, steel, and other building materials. The Plans describe specific methods that will be used during decontamination and demolition (D&D).

The Plans were developed as a condition for the RCRA Hazardous Waste Facility Permit for the HWMF, and RMHF Interim Status. The closure actions were evaluated under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in the draft Program Environmental Impact Report (DTSC, 2017). Under closure, all building debris will be characterized to identify and document proper handling and disposal. DOE will conduct pre- and post-decontamination sampling and surveying. It determines and documents proper handling of wastes and prevents the release of radiological or chemical contamination during the transfer of debris to the appropriate offsite disposal facilities. The HWMF and RMHF will be demolished using standard construction equipment and demolition techniques, as described in the Department of Energy Standard Operating Procedure for Demolition of Facilities in Area IV at the Santa Susana Field Laboratory, Revision C, August 2016 (draft SOP). Contaminated soil remaining after demolition, if present, will be addressed under the 2010 Administrative Order on Consent (AOC).

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) evaluated the Draft HWMF and Draft RMHF Closure Plans and the DOE Draft SOP, now available for public comment. DTSC will consider public comments prior to approval of the Plans. If approved, DOE will implement the closure plans. Note that implementation is contingent on DTSC finalizing its Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and DOE finalizing their Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This fact sheet provides information on the site background and a description of HWMF and RMHF activities, the public comment period and public hearings, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and contact information.

Public Comment Period
August 13 to September 27

45-day Public Comment Period

DTSC encourages you to review and comment on the Draft Plans. **Please send written comments by September 27, 2018:**

Postal Service
Laura Rainey, DTSC Senior Engineering Geologist and Project Manager
Site Mitigation and Restoration Program
5796 Corporate Avenue
Cypress, CA 90630

Email
Laura.Rainey@dtsc.ca.gov

You may also comment at the Public Hearings:

WOODLAND HILLS
Thursday, August 30, 2018
Open House 6:30 pm; Public Hearing 7:00 pm
El Camino Real Charter High School
Multipurpose Room
5440 Valley Circle Boulevard
Woodland Hills, CA 91367

SIMI VALLEY
Saturday, September 8, 2018
Open House 10 am; Public Hearing 10:30 am
Simi Valley Senior Center, Multipurpose Rm
3900 Avenida Simi
Simi Valley, CA 93063

FACILITY DESCRIPTION/ HISTORY

SSFL is an approximately 2,850-acre site where rocket engine testing and nuclear research took place. It is in the southeastern portion of Ventura County and lies near the crest of the Simi Hills. Nearby populations include the: City of Simi Valley as well as Canoga Park, Chatsworth and West Hills neighborhoods of the City of Los Angeles.

SSFL is divided into four administrative areas – Area I, II, III, and IV. Area I (except for the 41-acre Liquid Oxygen (LOX) Plant) and Area III are owned and operated by the Boeing Company (Boeing). Area II and the LOX Plant are owned by the federal government and administered by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Areas I, II and III will not be discussed further in this Facility Description/History. Area IV is owned by Boeing but some of the structures are owned by the federal government and administered by the DOE. The HWMF and RMHF are in Area IV and administered by DOE. DOE is responsible for demolition and soil cleanup within Area IV. The units regulated by the proposed closure plans are limited to the:

Hazardous Waste Management Facility (HWMF) – The HWMF Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) permitted unit managed under EPA ID No. CAD000629972. It includes:

- Building T029 - used as an instrument calibration facility between 1959 and 1974 and was vacant from 1974 to 1978. In 1978, T029 was repurposed for storage of alkali metals. Note that some historical documents may refer to Building T029 as 4029.
- Building T133 - used for the treatment of alkali metal waste. Treatment operations included (1) physical resizing, (2) oxidation of the reactive metals by heating, (3) capture/treatment of gas and liquid byproducts, and (4) offsite treatment and disposal of both solid and liquid wastes. Some historical documents may refer to Building T133 as 4133.

The primary purpose of the HWMF was storage and treatment of the non-radiological alkaline metal wastes produced by the Energy Technology Engineering Center (ETEC). The alkaline metals were produced as potential liquid metal coolants (primarily sodium and sodium-potassium alloy) in conjunction with research, engineering development and testing of liquid metal heat transfer components and systems.

The cooling systems were tested and developed to support the nuclear and energy research being conducted at ETEC. DOE ceased operations at the HWMF in 1997 and began the RCRA closure process. In 2007, DOE suspended further work to close the HWMF until DOE completes their EIS.

Radioactive Materials Handling Facility (RMHF) - The RMHF was constructed in 1959 to manage radioactive waste and was operational for about 50 years. The RMHF was used to treat and store radioactive and "mixed waste". "Mixed waste" is waste with both chemical and radiological constituents. The RMHF was used to support all SSFL nuclear operations and radioactive waste processing in Area IV.

The RMHF occupies 1.5 acres of land and includes 10 buildings, structures and a paved area. Specific portions of the RMHF are authorized by DTSC as a Hazardous Waste Interim Status Facility for storing and treating mixed waste for off-site disposal. The Interim Status Facility is comprised of a subset of the RMHF buildings and includes only:

- Building 4021 - constructed in 1959, and includes a packaging room, a decontamination room with a work area, a hot and cold change room, and a

laundry room. Operations included radioactive component cleaning, component size reduction, radioactive liquid waste processing (evaporation/solidification), decontamination services, and waste packaging.

- Building 4022 - was constructed in 1959 and designed to store material that contained mixed fission products and nuclear fuels. Building 4022 contains seven below grade concrete vaults for radioactive materials storage.
- Building 4621 - was constructed in the mid-1960s. It was used for interim storage of source materials and liquid waste.
- The Mixed Waste Storage Yard - is adjacent to Building 4621 and was used to store metal bins with mixed waste and contaminated equipment.

Some historical documents may refer to Buildings 4021, 4022 and 4621 as Buildings T021, T022, and T621 respectively. Also, until the mid-1990s, the RMHF was referred to as the Radioactive Materials Disposal Facility. Treatment activities have stopped, and the RMHF is in standby. Building 4021 became inactive in 2007 and all equipment was removed.

PERMITTING HISTORY

The HWMF began operation in 1978 and was fully permitted as a RCRA hazardous waste treatment and storage facility in 1983 for non-radiological chemical waste generated on-site. The RCRA permit was renewed in 1988 and 1993. In 1997, the HWMF ceased operation, and in 1999 DOE requested suspension of the permit requirements based on the HWMFs inoperable status, until a revised closure plan could be implemented.

In 2003, the HWMF permit expired, and DOE submitted an HWMF Closure Plan (December 2003) to DTSC. In February 2006, DTSC issued a Class 2 modification to the permit and approved the December 2003 HWMF Closure Plan. Soon afterwards, DOE began pre-demolition work, consisting of pre-demolition sampling and assessment activities. DTSC issued a letter on May 23, 2007, and a clarification letter dated June 4, 2007. The letter directed DOE to suspend all activities associated with the closure and/or D&D of the HWMF and the RMHF until the EIS was completed. DTSC also requested that DOE submit a Class 1 permit modification to allow extension of the closure schedule. In response to DTSC's letter, DOE placed the HWMF in a safe and stable configuration. Closure activities may resume after the DTSC's EIR and DOE's EIS are completed and a revised HWMF closure plan is approved by DTSC.

DTSC does not anticipate renewing the HWMF permit as the facility is completely non-operational and DOE plans to close the HWMF under a Closure Plan. Since the Permit was issued in 1983 DTSC has approved two Permit modifications as described below.

- February 2006, a Class 2 Modification was approved to revise the HWMF Closure Plan.
- January 2014, a Class 1 permit modification to change the HWMF operator from Boeing to DOE and North Wind Inc. was approved.

Additional details for each permit modification are presented on the DTSC-maintained EnviroStor Website: http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/hwmp_profile_report.asp?global_id=CAD000629972.

The RMHF began operation in the late 1950s. It gained Interim Status in March 1987 from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). In December 1997, DTSC formally authorized the RMHF as an Interim Status Facility. The RMHF was never granted a permit, and DTSC does not anticipate issuing a permit to the RMHF because the facility is in the process of closure.

In 2006, DOE submitted a revised closure plan for the RMHF [Revised January 2007]. In response to a Federal District Court for the Northern District of California's ruling, DTSC issued a letter on May 23, 2007, notifying DOE that review of the RMHF Closure Plan (October 2006 [Revised January 2007]) would be suspended until DOE

completes an EIS. In response to DTSC's letter, DOE submitted a letter requesting:

- a schedule extension for D&D activities,
- the ability to place the RMHF in a safe and stable configuration, and
- to conduct maintenance, environmental monitoring, and site characterization activities while working on finalizing the EIS.

Closure activities are expected to resume after the DTSC's EIR and DOE's EIS are completed and a revised RMHF closure plan is approved by DTSC.

DTSC approved a January 2014, a Class 1 permit modification to change the RMHF operator from Boeing to DOE and North Wind Inc. Additional details are presented on the DTSC-maintained EnviroStor Website: http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/hwmp_profile_report.asp?global_id=CA3890090001.

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS/PUBLIC HEARING

Before making a final determination, DTSC will respond to all public comments with a Response to Comments document. Those who submitted comments and those who request a copy will receive the Response to Comments document.

Public comments regarding the draft SOP will also be accepted at the time of the hearing. A copy of the Response to Comments document will be placed in the information repositories listed below. The final Closure Plan Approval determination will be noticed in the local newspaper.

Where can I find more information?
The draft Plans and other site related documents are available for public review at the following information repositories:

California State University,
Northridge - Oviatt Library
18111 Nordhoff Street 2nd Floor, Room 265
Northridge, CA 91330

Department of Toxic Substances Control
Chatsworth Regional Office
9211 Oakdale Avenue
Chatsworth, CA 91311

Platt Library
23600 Victory Boulevard
Woodland Hills, CA 91367

Simi Valley Library
2969 Tapo Canyon Road
Simi Valley, CA 93063

The administrative record is available at DTSC's Chatsworth office. The draft Closure Plans can be found at:
https://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Santa_Susana_Field_Lab/index.cfm click on the document library and scroll down on the left-hand side of the page to Permit-related Activities to find the following documents: Radioactive Materials Handling Facility (RMHF) and Hazardous Waste Management Facility (Building 29/133).

For questions regarding the Draft HWMF and Draft RMHF Closure Plans and the Draft DOE SOP please contact:

Laura Rainey, DTSC Senior Engineering Geologist and Project Manager
(714) 484-5434 or Laura.Rainey@dtsc.ca.gov.

For questions about the public participation process, please contact:

Michelle Banks-Ordone, DTSC Public Participation Specialist
(818) 717-6573 or Michelle.Banks-Ordone@dtsc.ca.gov.

For media questions, please contact:

Russ Edmondson, DTSC Public Information Officer
(916) 323-3372 or Russ.Edmondson@dtsc.ca.gov.

NOTICE TO HEARING IMPAIRED: TTY users may use the You may also contact the Public Participation Specialist listed at the end of this community notice.